

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 00673 072246Z

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 072043Z FEB 74

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3969

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3680

S E C R E T USNATO 0673

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS-12/31/82

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CATALANO'S REMARKS TO NPG PERM REPS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECDEF, USNMR SHAPE, USCINCEUR, USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT

REF: USNATO 0574

BEGIN SUMMARY. AT 4 FEBRUARY 1974 NPG PERM REPS MEETING,
AMBASSADOR CATALANO AGREED TO CIRCULATE TEXT OF STATEMENT HE
MADE ON MODIFICATIONS TO US STRATEGIC TARGETING POLICY
(REFTEL, PARA 2). INFORMAL MISSION TRANSLATION OF HIS
STATEMENT, WHICH HE CIRCULATED ON 5 FEBRUARY, IS PROVIDED
BELOW. MISSION HAS POUCHED ORIGINAL FRENCH TEXT TO
WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN TEXT:

TRANSLATION

ITALIAN REPRESENTATION TO THE
ATLANTIC COUNCIL
BOULEVARD LEOPOLD III
BRUSSELS

THE AMBASSADOR
SECRET

PAGE 02 NATO 00673 072246Z

BRUSSELS, 5 FEBRUARY 1974

H. E. JOSEPH LUNS
SECRETARY GENERAL

NATO

DEAR JOSEPH:

FOLLOWING THE DEBATE WHICH TOOK PLACE YESTERDAY IN THE
NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP, I AM FORWARDING TO YOU THE TEXT OF
MY INTERVENTION.

AT THE SAME TIME, I AM SENDING COPIES OF THIS LETTER
AND OF THE TEXT TO ALL COLLEAGUES IN THE NUCLEAR PLANNING
GROUP.

SIGNED/F. CATALANO

PERMANENT ITALIAN DELEGATION
TO NATO

BRUSSELS, 4 FEBRUARY 1974

MR. CHAIRMAN

FIRST I WOULD LIKE TO THANK AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD FOR THE EXPLANATIONS
HE WAS KIND ENOUGH TO GIVE US IN A MATTER AS COMPLEX AS THAT WHICH WE
HAVE AGREED TO CALL "NUCLEAR RETARGETING". CERTAIN QUESTIONS, WHICH
CAME TO OUR MINDS AFTER HAVING READ THE TEXT OF MR. SCHLESINGER'S
FIRST PRESS CONFERENCE AND ESPECIALLY AFTER SUCH AN EXTENSIVE AND
INTERESTING DEBATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS, HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED
A SATISFACTORY ANSWER THANKS TO AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD'S STATEMENT.
HOWEVER, OTHER QUESTIONS REMAIN TO BE CLARIFIED AND IT IS ABOUT
THESE THAT I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK BRIEFLY IN THE PERSPECTIVE IN
WHICH A EUROPEAN ALLY MUST STAND.

"STRATEGIC RETARGETING" PRESENTS - IT SEEMS TO ME - CONSIDERATIONS
OF TWO ORDERS, BOTH CONCERNING THE ESSENTIAL INTERESTS OF EUROPE: ONE
WHICH HAS A PRACTICAL CHARACTER AND THE OTHER A CHARACTER MORE
CLEARLY POLITICAL.

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN WITH THE FIRST, WHICH IS - IN MY OPINION -
SECRET

PAGE 03 NATO 00673 072246Z

THE LEAST COMPLEX.

THERE IS A NUCLEAR COUNTER-FORCE FUNCTION WHICH IS PRESENTLY
FULFILLED ALSO BY THE STRATEGIC WEAPONS UNDER SACREUR'S COMMAND:
THESE WEAPONS MANAGE TO DEFEAT PART OF THE SOVIET NUCLEAR WEAPONS
AIMED AGAINST EUROPE. ANOTHER PART OF THESE WEAPONS IS COVERED BY
THE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES UNDER AMERICAN COMMAND; BUT I ALSO
BELIEVE I KNOW - AND AM QUITE PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY CORRECTION IN
THIS - THAT A GOOD PART OF THE SOVIET INTERMEDIARY MISSILES
IS NOT COVERED AT PRESENT. WITH "RETARGETING", SHOULD IT BE
CONSIDERED THAT OTHER OBJECTIVES THREATENING EUROPE ARE NOW
COVERED SO AS TO LIGHTEN THE TASK OF THE NATO NUCLEAR FORCES BY
FREEING THEM FOR OTHER FUNCTIONS AND THAT, AS A RESULT, THE

PROTECTION OF EUROPE IS CONSEQUENTLY REINFORCED? IN OTHER WORDS, HAS COORDINATION BETWEEN THE NEW SIOP (SINGLE INTEGRATED OPERATIONS PLAN) AND THE GENERAL STRIKE PLAN, WHICH IS SACEUR'S RESPONSIBILITY, ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED?

IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PROBLEM OF THE NEW COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TWO PLANS HAS NOT YET COME UP, WOULD IT NOT BE NECESSARY TO ISSUE GENERAL DIRECTIVES OF A POLITICAL ORDER FOR THIS COORDINATION? IF THE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION IS AFFIRMATIVE - AS IN MY OPINION IT SHOULD BE MADE - ONE SHOULD ASK ONESELF WHICH IS THE FORUM TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT ON THESE POLITICAL DIRECTIVES? THIS SEEMS TO ME TO BE A PROBLEM WHICH ONE MUST CONSIDER AS IT REPRESENTS A PRELIMINARY STEP IN THE PRACTICAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE COORDINATION WHICH TAKES ON, OF COURSE, A TECHNICAL ASPECT.

BESIDES, THERE IS A MORE COMPLEX TECHNICAL PROBLEM: THAT OF THE OVERALL DETERRENCE STRATEGY RELATING TO THE CONCEPT ITSELF OF DETERRENCE.

THE FIRST REACTION WE HAVE HEARD FROM QUALIFIED ANALYSTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS IS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FLEXIBILITY INTRODUCED BY "TARGETING" WOULD FINALLY HAVE AS A RESULT THE WEAKENING OF DETERRENCE, FOR IT WOULD LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR ALLOWING THE UNITED STATES TO ACQUIRE A SO-CALLED "NUCLEAR WAR-FIGHTING CAPABILITY".

THE EXPLANATIONS GIVEN BY MR. SCHLESINGER (AND THOSE FURNISHED US TODAY BY AMBASSADOR RUMSFELD) ARE INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE
SECRET

PAGE 04 NATO 00673 072246Z

UNITED STATES FIRMLY BELIEVE THEY HAVE ACHIEVED PROGRESS IN THE RE-INFORCEMENT OF DETERRENCE. WE HAVE NO REASON NOT TO BELIEVE THAT THIS CONVICTION IS THE RESULT OF A THOROUGH STUDY ON THE PART OF THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES. WE HOPE VERY MUCH, HOWEVER, THAT THE LATTER HAVE STUDIED THE MATTER WELL, KEEPING IN MIND THE IDEA THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE OF THE CREDIBILITY OF AMERICAN NUCLEAR INTERVENTION.

BUT AT THIS POINT ONE MAY WONDER AT WHAT MOMENT THIS NECESSITY WILL BECOME MANIFEST? WILL THE MESSAGE THAT THE UNITED STATES HAVE DOUBTLESS WANTED TO TRANSMIT TO THE SOVIETS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A STRATEGIC "SELECTIVE" REACTION (THAT IS IN SUBSTANCE "LIMITED") STILL CONFIRM THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS REACTION WOULD INTERVENE NOT ONLY WHEN UNITED STATES TERRITORIES WOULD BE ENDANGERED BUT ALSO IN CASE OF A NUCLEAR AGGRESSION AGAINST EUROPE? AND IN THE EVENT OF A THREAT OF DESTRUCTION TO EUROPE ITSELF, IS THE HYPOTHESIS OF A MASSIVE US NUCLEAR INTERVENTION STILL VALID? WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THIS TO BE THE US POSITION - AND AMB RUMSFELD HAS JUST CONFIRMED THIS
-

BUT WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS WE HAVE IN ORDER TO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS
ARE PREPARED TO INTERPRET THE MESSAGE IN THE SAME WAY AND THAT THEY,

ON THE OTHER HAND, COULD NOT MAKE ERRORS IN JUDGING THIS MATTER?

ON THE BASIS OF WHAT WE BELIEVE TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD, NUCLEAR "RE-TARGETING" IS NOT A SUBSTITUTION OF THE STRATEGY AGAINST URBAN CENTERS BUT RATHER AN INTEGRATION OF THE LATTER WITH DIFFERENT OPTIONS. IN THIS

FRAMEWORK, WILL IT BE CORRECT TO SAY THAT THE ALLIANCE'S STRATEGY HAS NOT CHANGED IN SUBSTANCE BUT THAT ONLY CERTAIN METHODS IN THE APPLICATION OF THIS STRATEGY ARE MODIFIED? IF THIS IS CORRECT, IT SEEMS TO US PSYCHOLOGICALLY DANGEROUS TO SPEAK OF A NEW NUCLEAR STRATEGY BECAUSE OF THE ERRONEOUS DEDUCTIONS THE ADVERSE PARTY COULD DRAW THEREFROM.

END TEXT.

RUMSFELD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDEES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 JUN 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATO00673
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS-12/31/82
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740267/abbrytct.tel
Line Count: 181
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: USNATO 0574
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 MAR 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <31 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR CATALANO'S REMARKS TO NPG PERM REPS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
To: STATE INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005